

Remarks

Claims 1 – 9 are pending.

Claims 6 – 8 are withdrawn from consideration, but *still pending nonetheless*.

Claims 1 – 5 and 9 were rejected.

Claim Rejections

Claims 1 – 5 and 9 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Tixier (Catching and attaching cells using an array of microholes, 1st Annual International IEEE-EMBS Special Topic Conference on Microtechnologies in Medicine & Biology, October 12 – 14, 2000.).

Claims 1 and 9 have been amended to clarify that the inlet and outlet openings ends of the microfluidic channel are isolated from an external fluid bath that is placed in contact with apertures in the walls of the channel. Support for this amendment is found throughout the specification, including in the second paragraph of page nine:

"During operation of the microfluidic channel device, channel 100 is filled with a polar fluid such as water and an external fluid bath is placed in contact with apertures 110 so that fluid is free to flow from the channel through an aperture and into the bath and vice versa. *The bath is isolated from the ends of the channel* so that all fluid flow between the channel and the bath must be via apertures 110." (emphasis added)

Examiner supposes that apertures in Tixier may be interpreted as both "openings at each end" and "two or more apertures in the channel walls". Although this is clearly impossible in light of the description and figures, the foregoing amendment removes any possible doubt that "apertures" could be confused with "openings at each end."

At least some of the limitations of amended Claims 1 and 9 are not found in Tixier. Therefore the rejection under 35 USC 102(b) has been cured. Claims 2 – 5 depend from Claim 1.

Conclusion

In conclusion, and in view of the amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all claims are now in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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